

Ensuring treaty compliance

Effective implementation and full compliance with the Convention are essential to maintaining its moral force, credibility and visibility. This is why DFAIT initiated the Mine Monitoring Program (MMP) to build civil society capacity to monitor the implementation of the Ottawa Convention.

This year DFAIT disbursed \$450,000 to support Landmine Monitor, a civil society-based monitoring system coordinated by the ICBL. Landmine Monitor's research capacity includes over 70 researchers from all over the globe. DFAIT funding contributed to the preparation of the first Landmine Monitor Report, released at the First Meeting of States Parties in Maputo, Mozambique in May 1999.

Reducing stockpiles

Clearing a single mine in the ground costs up to US\$1000 and can be a deadly job. Destroying a stockpiled mine can cost as little as US\$3 and is both faster and safer. But not all states have the technical or financial capacity to destroy landmine stockpiles safely and effectively. Difficulty in destroying stockpiles

can prevent countries from signing and ratifying the Ottawa Convention because it has a four-year deadline for complete stockpile destruction. The Stockpile Destruction Program, managed jointly by DFAIT and DND, facilitates adherence to the Convention by providing states with the financial and technical assistance needed to destroy their stocks.

In 1998-99, \$172,000 was dedicated to the Stockpile Destruction Program. A key diplomatic breakthrough this year was the signing of a memorandum of understanding between Canada and the Ukraine. As a direct result, Ukraine signed the Convention just before it entered into force on March 1. Ukraine is burdened by an economic crisis and the legacy of a Soviet-era stockpile of 10 million mines, including some of the world's most toxic. This makes international assistance vital if Ukraine is to meet its treaty commitments. Under the memorandum Canada committed to provide technical and financial assistance for stockpile destruction. In cooperation with an international consortium of donors, Canada will help the Ukraine purchase an incineration facility to dispose of the stockpiles.

Former Minister of International Trade Sergio Marchi and Ukrainian Foreign Minister Borys Tarasiuk at the signing of a series of agreements between the two countries, including a memorandum of understanding on stockpile destruction.

